ANCIENT NORMAN FONT AT STANTON FITZWARREN CHURCH, WILTS.

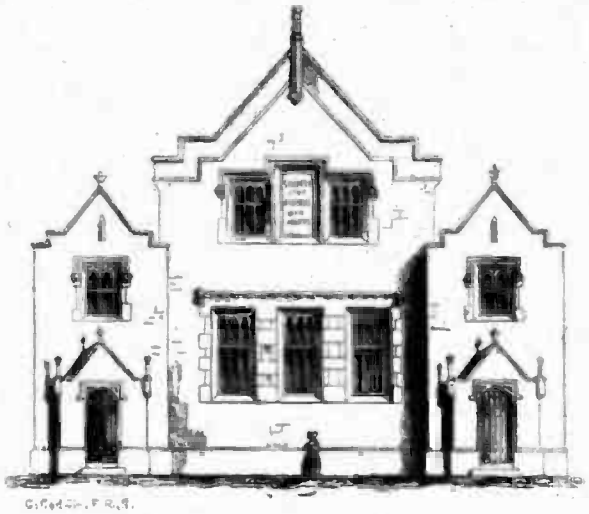
The small church of Stanton Fitzwarren, in which the fine font represented on the other side, is to be found, is situated about three miles from Swindon, in Wiltshire. The font has, only within the last three years, been relieved from a load of whitewash, which had so completely filled up the carving, that it looked like a rough stone. This cleaning out was superintended by the Rev. J. Trenchard, the rector, and he certainly has been rewarded for his trouble, as a more interesting font can scarcely be found. The date is probably that of the late Norman. The illustrations scarcely require any description, except to state that it is termed an emblematical and inscribed font, representing the Triumph of the Virtues, with the aid of the Church, over a variety of curious hob-goblins termed Vices. On one side of the font, opposite to the figure emblematical of the Church, is a kneeling stone, no higher than the slanting moulding at the base. The sketch was taken with the camera lucida while a strong light was on the object.

The church is said to have been a very curious structure, but it has now, from being either composed or refaced, the appearance of a modern building. The interior has a chancel arch, which bears the reputation in the neighbourhood of being Saxon, but it is in reality a fine early Norman specimen. C. J. R.

DESCRIPTION OF A HOUSE IN DAMASCUS.

In order to give me an opportunity of seeing his house, the Effendi politely sent a message to the ladies of his establishment, announcing the presence of a stranger, on which they withdrew to the upper chambers. The Mulatto having duly informed us that all was in readiness, we rose, and passing through another dark passage, found ourselves in the court-yard of the harem. Then, and not till then, did I understand the warmth with which travellers had spoken of the beauty of the Damascene houses: we seemed to have passed from Purgatory to Paradise. The pavement of the immense yard was of polished marble of various colours, beautifully inlaid. A fountain in the centre, thirty feet in length and half that breadth, into which brazen snakes' heads poured a copious supply of water, was overhung by orange, citron, and pomegranate trees; and an immense vaulted recess (*leewan*) at the further end was fitted up with a divan, which, having a northern exposure, is never subject to the rays of the sun. As in Egypt, the ground-floor was of stone, and painted in alternate layers of white, blue, and red: this, with the rich dark green vegetation of parterres divided by slabs of Carrara, produced the most brilliant and captivating effect on me. The space between the basin and the recess was elaborately inlaid, and the marbles of rarer quality than in any other part of the court-yard. The principal apartment, which opened off the lower part of the leewan, was lofty, extensive, and of dazzling magnificence. Every part of the wall was of stone, cut into arabesque ornaments, the most curious object being a miniature recess of white marble, supported by tiny columns with gilt capitals, between which the Saracenic honeycomb luxuriated in all its intricacy. The raised floor was covered with a rich Persian carpet, and the divan that ran round the room was in satin, embroidered with flowers. Large antique China bowls displayed themselves in various shelves; and altogether I felt that the often sought but rarely found splendour of the Arabian Nights' Entertainment was at length realized.—*The Modern Syrians.*

Bonner Hall.—Last Monday week a sale took place, by order of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, of the ancient residence formerly belonging to Bishop Bonner, called Bonner Hall, which is situated on a part of the site of Victoria-park. The portion remaining, which is stated to have been a part of one of the wings of the original palace, is about 120 feet long and about 20 feet in width, the external walls being the same that were first erected. This building has for several years past been separated into five houses, one of which was a public-house. These have been internally constructed according to the modern style of architecture, and there is very little to denote its former state.



C. Cockerell, F.R.S.

THE BROMPTON PAROCHIAL NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

These Schools, represented above, are situated on the north side of Knightsbridge, and will accommodate 200 girls and 200 boys; rooms for the master and mistress are attached, on either side. The building was erected from the designs of Mr. George Godwin, by Mr. Bonnin, Jun., in little more than four months. The amount of the contract was 1100*l.*, the additional works came to 8*l.*; the forms, boxes, and desks cost 48*l.*

FIRE FROM OVERHEATED FLUES.

Mr. Braidwood, the superintendent of the Fire Brigade, accompanied by a surveyor, made a close examination of the ruins of Mr. Farey's house in Great Guildford-street, recently burnt down, with the view of ascertaining, if possible, the cause of the fire, for the information of Mr. Wakley and the jury; and the former gentleman expressed his decided opinion to be, that it was occasioned by a hot-air flue becoming overheated, and setting fire to a beam in the back parlour. The death of the unfortunate persons he attributes to the falling in of the upper stories, through the insufficiency of the building, the timber, and joists, &c., having been (as he says) too light for so capacious a residence, as was the case in Lord Hillsborough's mansion in Grosvenor-street last year, which fell in before it was burnt to the lower stories. Mr. Braidwood is confirmed in this opinion by several surveyors. Mr. Farey differs from Mr. Braidwood as to the particular flue in which the fire originated. In addressing the jury Mr. Wakley observed, "If this inquiry should have the effect of drawing the attention to flues in general, great benefit may be derived from it, and future accidents be prevented. Too much attention cannot be paid to them, and I am really surprised that intelligent people in this country as we are should allow such fires to be continually occurring without taking measures to prevent them." At the inquest, Colfe, of the Fire Brigade, remarked that "even hot-water pipes would set fire to beams. Such an instance had recently happened at Day and Martin's Warehouse." The coroner said "this was something new in science," but, we are sure, if he had reflected, he would have seen it was nothing new, and was perfectly correct. In an open vessel, water cannot be heated above the boiling point, all the surplus calorie goes off in steam; but in a close boiler the case is very different. It may be made *red-hot*, so to speak, and would ignite wood. Two or three years ago this fact excited considerable attention, in consequence of a fire at Manchester which was attributed to the hot-water apparatus on the premises. Persons having stoves with iron pipe flues, should be certain that the pipe is not in contact with any ignitible material. In the construction of chimneys it is important to see that the end of no beam enters the flue, and that in fixing skirting-grounds, no deal wedges be driven through. To the subject of fires generally, we shall return before long.

ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF HAND-RAILS OF STAIRS.

BY MR. GEORGE RIDLEY.

No. III.

25. From the combined properties of the trihedral and the cylindric solid, as shewn in our former remarks on this subject, we are enabled to make their use subservient to any purpose relative to the formation of the face-mould; and from the properties of the trihedral alone, we can ascertain, to the greatest degree of accuracy, the bevels for the butt-joints in the wreathed portions of the hand-rail. In order, however, to make the use and application of these solids more clear, let us suppose that it were required to lay down the face-moulds, for the formation of the wreathed portion of a hand-rail, where a flight of seven winding steps intervenes between two ranges of flyers. Let the semi-circular well-hole, around which the winding steps radiate, be 3 inches in diameter within the perpendicular planes of the outside surfaces of the rail. Let the rail itself be 3 inches wide and 2½ inches deep; also let the treads of the flyers be 10 inches wide, and the height of each step 7 inches.

26. The first thing to be done is to lay down a plan of the rail, as shewn by fig. 10, wherein the circular line, E F G, is taken as the mean line for the radius of our cylindric surface (see article No. 11. page 620, vol. ii.); next proceed to lay down a development of this cylindric surface, by obtaining the length of the circular line, E F G, in the manner described in article No. 10, page 619, vol. ii., or, by having ascertained the diameter, E G, which in the present case is 6 inches, we may, from the well-known properties of the circle, obtain the length of one-half the circumference, thus,

$$\frac{11 \times 6}{7} = 9\tfrac{3}{7} \text{ inches.}$$

the length of the line, E F G, sufficiently near for practice. Make the line, C D, equal to E F G; let the point *a* in the development correspond with the point F on the plan. At the point C lay down the riser and tread of the last step in the first range of flyers, draw the parallelogram, A B C D. Upon D B set off the entire height of the seven winding steps, and next lay down the tread and riser of the first step in the second range of flyers; also lay down the treads and risers of the winding steps, as they occur immediately beneath the central line of the rail. Draw the inclination of the rail over each of the flyers, as thus laid down; but from the steepness of the steps, at the narrow ends of the winders, it is usual to bring forward the rail, as shewn

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